

Planning/Design and Access Statement

**Demolition of existing buildings and erection of 2 no. dwellings
with associated car ports/parking, alterations to
existing access and relocation of
existing staircase to flats**

**Land to the Rear of Beechlands Cottages,
Beechlands Close, East Preston**

**On behalf of
Dearden Homes Ltd**

May 2021

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This statement has been prepared on behalf of my client Dearden Homes Ltd to support this application for the demolition of the existing buildings on this site and the erection of 2 no. new dwellings with associated car ports and parking, alterations to existing access and the relocation of the existing staircase to the adjoining flats.
- 1.2 Planning permission was granted for the development the subject of this application in 2018 under application EP/7/18. For a number of reasons, the development has not commenced and therefore this application effectively seeks a renewal of that permission.
- 1.3 This statement reflects that which was originally submitted in 2018 but has been updated as the policy situation has changed with the adoption of the Local Plan. It should be noted however that the adopted plan was at an advanced stage when the previous application was considered and therefore carried weight in its determination. Furthermore, the current Local Plan does not fundamentally alter the thrust of policies against which new development in built up areas are considered, but this statement will set out the considerations and demonstrate the scheme's continued compliance.

2. The Site and Its Surroundings

- 2.1 The site the subject of this application lies on the north side of Beechlands Close to the rear of Nos. 1-4 Beechlands Cottages. The existing cottages were erected following the grant of planning permission in 2009 (EP/91/09) and the development replaced garages which were formerly on the site. Planning permission was granted for an additional dwelling on the eastern end of the terrace (EP/41/17). That proposal maintains an access on the east side of the site to a now vacant commercial building and six retained garages located to the north. It is this land to the north which is now the subject of this proposal.
- 2.2 The site is currently occupied by six rather dilapidated garages adjacent to its northern boundary and a single storey brick built building on the southern boundary (adjacent to the rear boundaries of Beechlands Cottages) which was in use temporarily by a security company but is now vacant. To the west lie the shops which front onto Sea Road with flats above. The rear elevations of the flats are however set back from the rear elevation of the shops to provide access via stairs and a communal walkway. A service access runs from Beechlands Close between the shops and no. 1 Beechlands Cottages.
- 2.3 To the north of the existing garages lies the rear garden of 125 North Lane which, at this point, contains a large outbuilding and large surfaced area for parking and turning.

To the east lie the garages to the flats in Beechlands Court. The site is therefore surrounded by residential development and in a highly sustainable location in the centre of the village.



Google Image of Site

3. The Application Proposal

- 3.1 The application proposes the demolition of the existing garages and single storey building on the site and erection of two link detached dwellings running across the centre of the site from west to east. Private amenity space will be provided to the north of the dwellings and parking within integral car ports and on the forecourt to the south. Access will be from Beechlands Close and turning will be available on site.
- 3.2 The application also proposes improvements to the existing service access which passes along the west side of Beechlands Cottages. This will maintain and improve access to the rear of the shops for delivery purposes. Such access is only by agreement with the owner of the shops as the majority of deliveries take place to the front due to ease of access there. The tenants of the shops and flats have no right to park on

the application site. All other rights of access such as UK Power Network and 125 North Lane will remain. An area for the shops to store delivery trolleys and bins is also proposed which represents an improvement on the current situation where no such storage facilities exist.

- 3.3 To facilitate access along the western boundary, the existing means of escape staircase which projects into the site is proposed to be relocated to the northern end of the shops/flats. This staircase is for emergency use only as all the flats have their main access at the front of the shops. It is proposed to include screening along the north side of the staircase to preclude any overlooking although such overlooking northwards already exists from the walkway.

4. Planning Policy

- 4.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development which comprises three overarching objectives; economic, social and environmental. It states that the three objectives are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives).
- 4.2 Sustainable development is placed at the heart of the Framework and paragraph 10 states that there is the presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision taking this means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay or, where the development plan is out of date, granting permission unless any adverse impact of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against policies in the Framework taken as a whole (paragraph 11d)ii). The Council cannot currently demonstrate a 5-year supply of housing and it has been identified as a 'presumption' authority in the Housing Delivery Test 2020. Paragraph 11d)ii is therefore engaged.
- 4.3 The Government's objective is to significantly boost the supply of homes and paragraph 68 states that small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area. It states that local planning authorities should support the development of windfall sites through their policies and decisions - giving great weight to the benefits of using suitable sites within existing settlements for homes.
- 4.4 Section 9 promotes sustainable transport and how this can be delivered through the planning system. Paragraph 103 states that development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes.

- 4.5 Part 11 of the NPPF encourages the effective use of land and paragraph 117 states “Planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions.” The NPPF also states that substantial weight should be given to the value of using brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs and supports the development of under-utilised land and buildings especially if this would help to meet identified needs for housing where land supply is constrained and available sites could be used more effectively.
- 4.6 Section 12 of the NPPF deals with design and paragraph 124 states “Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.” It also seeks to ensure that developments are visually attractive, sympathetic to local character and optimises the potential of a site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development.
- 4.7 For the purposes of this application the development plan consists of the Arun District Local Plan 2018. The most relevant policies of the Local Plan are:
- Policy SD SP1 – Sustainable development** - this confirms the positive approach that the Council will take reflecting the presumption in favour of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF.
- Policy SD SP2 – Built up area boundary** - development will be permitted within built up area boundaries subject to consideration of other policies in the plan.
- Policy D SP1 – Design** - this encourages proposals to make efficient use of land whilst reflecting the characteristics of the site and surrounding area.
- Policy D DM1 – Aspects of form and design quality** - sets out the matters that the Council will have regard to and includes character, appearance and impact and density.
- Policy D DM2 – Internal Space Standards** - requires appropriately sized internal space using the Nationally Described Space Standards as a guide.
- T DM1 – Sustainable Travel and Public Rights of Way** – encourages new development to be able to access alternative modes of transport.
- QE SP1 - Quality of the Environment** - requires that all development contributes positively to the quality of the environment and will ensure that development does not have a significantly negative impact upon residential amenity, the natural environment or upon leisure and recreational activities enjoyed by residents and visitors to the District.
- 4.8 The Arun District Design Guide SPD 2021 was adopted in January this year. For a single plot such as this the section on infill proposals (section P) and residential outdoor

amenity (section H.04) are the most relevant. The WSCC parking standards have also been revised since this application was last determined and are relevant to this proposal along with the Council's SPD on Parking.

- 4.9 The most relevant policies of the Made East Preston Neighbourhood Plan are policies 1 and 3. Policy 1 states that development proposals will be supported provided, amongst other matters, the scale, density, massing, height, landscape design, layout and materials reflect the character of the surrounding buildings and it meets the adopted car parking standards. Beechlands Close lies in Character Area 2 which is defined largely an area of bungalows and policy 3 therefore seeks to maintain this character. However, this site the subject of this application is surrounded by two storey development and therefore it is in this context that it needs to be considered. Clearly, in approving the development in 2018, officers and Members of the Planning Committee concluded that the development would accord with the character of the area.

5. Planning Considerations

- 5.1 The site lies within the built-up area boundary and therefore, in accordance with policy SD SP2 of the local plan and the advice in the NPPF that seek to guide development towards sustainable locations, the site is suitably located to accommodate residential development. The main issues for consideration are whether there have been any material changes in circumstances that result in the proposed development no longer being of an appropriate design or layout to be in keeping with the character of the area or no longer respects the amenities of adjoining residents. It is also necessary to consider whether the access and parking arrangements remain appropriate.

Design and Layout

- 5.2 The proposed dwellings will be situated fairly centrally on the site and will comprise 2 no. two storey link detached dwellings. Unit 1 to the east will have a ridge height of 7.6m and Unit 2 will have a ridge height of 8.5 m. The dwellings will each have an integral car port with a bedroom above; one located at the western end of the pair and one between the two properties. These sections are designed as subservient elements with ridge heights of only 6.2m and 6m respectively.
- 5.3 The two storey elements of the proposal are not out of keeping with the general character of the area being surrounded by two storey development including Beechlands Cottages, the flats to the east, and shops/flats to the west. Having the car port on the western end of the building results in a lower, narrower, half hipped elevation facing the rear of the flats ensuring that the impact of the building is minimised.

- 5.4 The dwellings are proposed to be constructed in materials in keeping with other developments in the locality. In this respect the dwellings will be constructed in brick with fibre cement boarding used to break up elements on the front elevations and wrap around the east elevation. The roof will be plain clay tiles with bonnet hips. In design terms therefore the dwellings will be similar to other developments approved in the locality and there has been no change in context since the previous permission.



South Elevation (front)

- 5.5 Each property will have a living, dining room, kitchen and w.c. on the ground floor with three bedrooms and two bathrooms at first floor level. The eastern property (Unit 1) will have a GIA of 108sqm and the western unit (Unit 2) will have a GIA of 118sqm exceeding the Nationally Described Space Standards. Externally, the properties will have gardens of 10m in depth and areas of 119sqm and 93sqm respectively. Whilst section H.04 of the recently adopted Design Guide refers to garden depths of 10.5m, section 9 deals specifically with backland development and seeks to ensure usable and appropriate external amenity space for proposed properties. It states that “Sizes will be mainly (my emphasis) determined as per section H.04. It is advisable that the usable rear, external amenity space is at least the same size as the footprint of the property.” In this case, the proposal provides appropriate and usable amenity space that exceeds the footprint of the individual properties even with the car ports included in the footprint. It is therefore concluded that the proposal accords with the policy expectations for private amenity space.
- 5.6 The Design Guide and Local Plan policy QE SP1 also requires preservation of existing amenity for surrounding properties and suitable amenities for future occupiers of the development. The application scheme was designed with all this in mind and carefully considered when the last application was approved. In terms of potential overlooking to the rear of Unit 2 from the walkway to the flats, the windows on the rear elevation

have been carefully positioned with only one bedroom window at the eastern end of the rear elevation which is around 13m from the end of the walkway and at an oblique angle which will preclude intervisibility. To protect the amenities of the proposed gardens, the fence on the western boundary will be raised with trellising to restrict overlooking.

- 5.7 In terms of the relationship of the proposed dwellings with the rear elevations of Beechlands Cottages, the scheme has been designed so that there are only 3 first floor habitable rooms on the south elevation which will be around 21m from the rear of the existing cottages including the end property which has planning permission but has yet to be completed. The properties are also at an oblique angle. In terms of the north elevations, these will be situated 10m from the northern boundary which represents an appropriate distance to preclude overlooking.

Parking and Access

- 5.8 The site is located in parking behaviour zone 2 and the ADC Parking SPD indicates a requirement for 2 spaces per dwelling. Two spaces are proposed to be allocated to each dwelling with one being a car port. It is submitted that the car ports should be counted as a parking space as they will be open fronted (and in the case of unit 2, open sided) so unlikely to be used for anything other than the parking of vehicles. A condition can be imposed as before requiring them to be retained for parking. One space is provided for visitors which meets the requirement for 20% of the number of units (in this case 0.4). The proposal therefore provides sufficient on-site parking to meet its needs and is in a highly sustainable location where other means of transport are available.
- 5.9 Sheds are proposed in the rear gardens of the properties which will provide cycle storage for the future occupiers and will be accessible through the car ports. Two cycles can be stored in the sheds in accordance with the standards.
- 5.10 The access from Beechlands Close is existing and serves the garages and building currently on the site. The traffic movements associated with the new dwellings will therefore replace the existing movements and there will be unlikely to be a material increase. The access will be designed to be 4.5m wide at the entrance enabling two cars to pass without waiting on the public highway. In all other respects, it is submitted that the access can adequately serve the development and will not give rise to any severe residual impacts. WSCC raised no objections to the previously approved scheme. The western access road will be improved within the application site by relocating the retaining wall to improve the width.

Foul & Surface Water Drainage

- 5.11 The proposed development will connect to the public foul sewer. Surface water will be designed in accordance with the SuDS hierarchy, the details of which can be controlled by condition as before.

Bin Storage & Collection

- 5.12 A bin store is proposed within the curtilage of each dwelling. A bin collection point is proposed adjacent to the eastern boundary at the top of the access drive. This will be sufficient to store refuse and recycling bins for each resident. It is anticipated that the refuse vehicle will not have to enter the site and that the bins will be collected by the operatives from the store.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 The application proposal provides for two new dwellings within this highly sustainable village centre location. It makes effective use of this under-utilised brownfield site and, given the particular characteristics its surroundings, does not cause any unacceptable adverse impacts and represents a form of development in-keeping with the locality. The proposed dwellings have been designed to provide a high-quality development and respects the amenities of adjoining residents. The dwellings meet the internal and external space requirements of the Local Plan and Design Guide and the plot sizes are appropriate to their context.
- 6.2 There have been no material change in circumstances on the site (apart from the existing building now being empty) and whilst the Local Plan has been adopted since the last approval, it was a material consideration during its determination. As the Council is a presumption authority, the decision in this case should be made in accordance with the presumption in favour of development. No adverse impacts have been identified that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the Framework as a whole.
- 6.3 It is therefore concluded that the proposal remains development plan compliant and there are no material changes in circumstances that would justify a decision at variance with that made in 2018 for the same proposal. It is requested that a new permission is granted on this basis.